

Memoirs of flimself.

characters were moulded in the
manufactory
sent forth like images of clay of kindred
shape and

from a pottery.—I am supposing, all along, that the person who writes memoirs of himself, is conscious of something more peculiar than a mere dull resemblance of that ordinary form and insignificance of character, which it strangely depreciates our nature to see such a multitude exemplifying. As to the crowd of those who are faithfully stamped, like bank notes, with the same marks, with the difference only of being worth more guineas or fewer, they are mere particles of a class, mere pieces and bits of the great vulgar or the small; *they* need not write their history, it may be found in the newspaper chronicle, or the gossip's or the sexton's narrative.

It is obvious, in what I have suggested respecting the research through past life, that all the persons who are recalled to the mind, as having had an influence on us, must stand before it in judgment. It is impossible to examine our moral and intellectual growth without forming an estimate, as we proceed, of those who retarded, advanced, or perverted it. Our dearest relations and friends cannot be exempted. There will be in some instances the necessity of blaming where we would wish to give entire praise ; though perhaps some worthy motives and generous feelings may, at the same time, be discovered in the conduct, where they had hardly been perceived or allowed before. But, at any rate, it is important that in no instance the judgment be duped into delusive estimates, amidst the examination, and so as to compromise the principles of the examination, by which we mean to bring ourselves to rigorous justice. For if any indulgent partiality, or mistaken idea, of that duty which requires a kind and candid feeling to accompany the clearest discernment of defects, may be permitted to beguile our judgment out of the decisions of justice in favour of others, self-love, a still more indulgent and partial feeling, will not fail to practise the same beguilement in favour of ourselves. But indeed it would seem impossible, besides being absurd, to apply one set of principles to judge of ourselves, and another to judge of those with whom we have associated.

Every person of tolerable education has been considerably influenced by the books he has read ; and remembers with a